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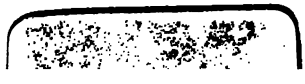
MEMORIALS
OF
PASTORAL AFFECTION
BY THE
REV. JOHN STEVENSON

47. 1719.



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MEMORIALS

OF

PASTORAL AFFECTION.

MEMORIALS

OF

PASTORAL AFFECTION,

WITH

TWO FAREWELL SERMONS,

ADDRESSED TO THE

PARISHIONERS OF CURY AND GUNWALLOE,
CORNWALL.

BY THE

REV. JOHN STEVENSON,

VICAR OF PATRIXBOURNE-WITH-BRIDGE, KENT.

LONDON:

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1847.

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MEMORIALS

OF

PASTORAL AFFECTION.

My dear Friends,

The kind request that I should publish the farewell Sermons addressed to you, affords me an opportunity of presenting you with this little memorial of pastoral affection. Our connection as pastor and flock is now dissolved, but not so, I trust, our feelings of mutual interest and attachment. For ten years I have been entrusted with a charge over your immortal souls; and in your temporal and eternal welfare I must ever continue to feel the very deepest interest. God grant that, though separated on earth, we may meet together in heaven!

Many are the ways, my dear friends, which lead to destruction. There is but one that conducts to everlasting happiness. Into that path I have earnestly desired to direct your feet. Those among you who have not yet entered it, I would now again, as for the last time, implore to do so without delay; and those who, by Divine grace, are walking therein, I would entreat to persevere unto the end. The hindrances to our progress are many, and the enemies that oppose our advance are vigilant

and determined. But greater is He that is on our side than all they that can be against us. The great "Captain of our salvation" thus addresses each of us, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Let this word animate us to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life. But a short time, and the warfare shall be accomplished. Happy they who shall then be found "more than conquerors through Him that loved" them. They shall be crowned as victors, they shall be clothed in white, and they shall wave the palm of an everlasting triumph over Satan, Sin, and Hell!

That you, my dear friends, may be partakers of the Saviour's joy, sharers in the everlasting victory, and wearers of the heavenly crown, has long been my earnest prayer. My ministry, you know, was exercised amongst you in much weakness, and amid repeated illness and protracted sufferings. I deeply feel how very far short I have come in my duty toward your immortal souls. And now I shall rejoice if this little volume placed in your hands may in any measure supply my lack of service toward you. "God is my record how greatly I long after you all."—"My heart's desire and prayer to God for every one of you is, that you may be saved." Awful is the alternative for precious and immortal souls. Every true pastor's heart trembles at the thought of a lost parishioner. Keep

these two alternatives ever in view, I earnestly beseech you. Let the one repel you from destruction: let the other attract you to salvation. Shut not your eyes to the truth. Take it not too easily for granted that all shall be well with you at the last. Set before your mind, each of you, in solemn, serious, meditation, the awful truth embodied in these three words, "MY SOUL LOST!" And oh, cease not your earnest search, your anxious inquiries, till on good grounds you are each enabled to appropriate all the delight, the rapture, the everlasting joy, which are embosomed in these three words, "MY SOUL SAVED!"

If any question be worthy to occupy the mind of an immortal being, surely it should be his own eternal destiny. Indifferency to this question is soul-destructive. "How shall we escape," asks the Apostle, "if we neglect so great salvation?" Yet "*neglect*" is the sin of multitudes. They would not do anything knowingly wrong against God or their fellow creatures. They wish to lead a quiet and an inoffensive life. They love the world, and endeavour to acquit themselves, it may be, to all their neighbours in a kind and amiable manner. But they are not in earnest about their souls. They neglect the great salvation. Eternity to them is like some distant ocean of which they may have heard, but of which they seldom think, and on which they never entertain any conscious desire to em-

bark. Let not this be the case with any of you, my dear friends. "Give good heed unto the things that ye have heard, lest at any time ye should let them slip." Let the eternal world be a present reality to your minds; and as surely as you desire to be happy here, so, with tenfold more earnestness, desire to be happy hereafter. Be not engrossed with the cares of a present life, so as to have no care for the life to come. Let not the honours of this world allure you. Let not its riches deceive you. This world is a passing shadow—Heaven is an enduring substance. This world is a pilgrimage—Heaven is a home. This world is a desert—Heaven is a paradise. This world is full of strangers—Heaven is filled with friends. This world's friendships are often hollow, and its enmities are real—Heaven ensures everlasting friendship, and excludes all manner of enmity. This world abounds with storm and tempest—Heaven is a universal calm without and within. This world is full of trial and conflict—Heaven is all love, and rest, and peace. This world is full of changes; the summer's sun gives way to winter's cold—Heaven changes not from summer's genial glow. This world is full of sin—Heaven is full of holiness. This world lieth in the wicked one—Heaven lieth in the bosom of God. This world tempts the soul, and torments the spirit—Heaven presents no temptation, and yields no kind of torment. This world groans with sick-

ness and disease—Heaven rejoices with health and happiness. This world is the abode of sin, and shame, and sorrow—Heaven is the abode of goodness, of glory, and of God! Blessed is the contrast which heaven presents to earth. Oh that I could more fully describe to you that world of bliss, to which it is bliss even to look forward!

Look, then, ever upwards, my dear friends. Let the hope of the heavenly glory take full possession of your breasts. And whenever Satan assaults you, or sin would beguile you, or your own weak hearts would waver, look upward again, and with renewed determination, press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The noble army of martyrs were faithful unto death. Multitudes of Christians in various ages have proved their fidelity to their great Master. They showed that, like the Apostle, they reckoned the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory which was to be revealed in them. Let us also learn to think and to say the same. The remembrance of the just is blessed. Some of our own friends and neighbours have left us an example that we should follow them as they followed Christ. They are now resting from their labours, and their journey through the wilderness is ended. Some of them were young, and others were advanced in years. Various were their situations, their dispositions, their temptations, and their trials, yet they

persevered along the narrow path of life, and shrunk not at the descent into the valley of the shadow of death. As the pastor of the flock, it was my duty and my privilege to attend the last hours of your departing friends; and I can truly say, that I often entered the house of mourning to obtain, rather than to communicate, instruction. I wished to know how to live, and I wished to learn how to die! Often have I desired that you could be partakers of the benefits which I derived from the sick and dying beds of your fellow parishioners. And were I now to give you an account of some of the Christian experience there exhibited, I think I should convey more spiritual instruction to your souls, than any words or observations of my own could afford. Time and space, however, will not permit me at present to mention more than two cases.

The first departing parishioner I was called to attend (the late Mr. Secombe, of Polwin) was an experienced believer, whose consistent life and blameless conversation had gained for him the esteem even of some who were not themselves actuated by religious principle. He was in a declining state for some time before I commenced my ministry amongst you, and it was evident on my first visit that soon the mortal tenement would cease to possess its spiritual inhabitant. Of this fact he was himself quite conscious, but the near approach of

death caused him no alarm. And when I stood beside the couch of that dying believer, witnessed the heavenly composure of his countenance, and heard him say, in accents of genuine humility, "I'm going home to glory," I felt this one deep and all-absorbing desire take possession of my breast, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

It was a scene of eternal interest. There was more than mere human power sustaining the weak and expended frame. In the midst of most severe sufferings, there was the meekness of patience. In the midst of weeping friends, there was a holy composedness of spirit. In the midst of all his exultation over death, an unfeigned humility was manifest. There was no extravagance, and there was no display. All was calm, all was peaceful, all was reality. You beheld before you a fellow-mortal walking through the valley of the shadow of death, and yet "fearing no evil." You could see the ravages of death in his pale countenance and emaciated body, but you could perceive also an energy from the quickening Spirit in the glistening of his dying eye, and in the cheerful accents of praise to the Redeemer, which issued from his parched lips. I could have wished that you had all been there, my brethren, to witness the solemn scene, and to receive that lesson which it so forcibly taught; namely, "while we live to live unto the Lord, and when we

die to die unto the Lord; that whether living or dying, we may be the Lord's."

This is the lesson, my dear friends, which God is continually desiring to teach us. Both in his word and in his providence, there is a loud and constant call upon us to remember that we are "not our own," but that we are "bought" with the price of blood, and that the "precious" blood of the Son of God; and therefore that we are bound to "live no longer to ourselves, but to Him that died for us, and that rose again."

In Mr. Secombe there was a beautiful exhibition of the various graces of the Christian character. We may say, that the catalogue of the fruits of the Spirit, which the Apostle gives in his Epistle to the Galatians, affords a description of those graces which God had manifested in him. There was love, there was joy, there was peace; there was longsuffering and gentleness; there was meekness, goodness, and faith. There was a lovely resignation to his Father's will, and a sweetness of patience under all his sufferings. It was remarked, that even though the sharpest pangs were agitating his body, he would look meekly up and say, "Thank the Lord! how good he is to me! He has not put upon me more than he enables me to bear." Thus in his sickness, he proved himself to be the same true Christian that he had appeared to be in health; ever desirous that the will of God should be done on earth as it is in

heaven. The same fact is proved by all his friends. Many can testify, that when he sustained severe losses in business, he would meekly submit, and say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth to him good." No murmur escaped his lips against a God of love. He presumed not to repine at the dark providences of his heavenly Father, for he was persuaded that "He did all things well." Even from his youth upwards, he is reported to have been an exemplary character. Naturally of a quiet and modest demeanour, he proved steady and industrious in his course through life, and honest and honourable in all his intercourse with his fellow-men.

The general excellencies of his character are too many to be enumerated. I will select three which appeared prominent in his life, and were very conspicuous at his death: First, Humility; Secondly, Love to the souls of others; and, Thirdly, Delight in prayer and in communion with his God.

First. His humility was remarkable. No self-praise was ever heard from his lips. He rejoiced in his Lord and Saviour, as the Apostle enjoins; but he was too conscious of his own unworthiness to rejoice ever in himself. In truth, his very assurance of salvation was rooted in the truest humility. So clearly did he see and feel his own lost and undone condition as a sinner, that he entirely looked away from himself to the Redeemer, and

gloried only in his righteousness. He was so occupied with "looking unto Jesus," as to think nothing of himself. I had been informed of his blameless life, and asked him whether he trusted to his own righteousness, and on what he grounded his confident expectation of heaven? The very words seemed to shock his inmost soul, and to grieve him to the heart. He instinctively shuddered at the thought. "Oh, no!" he replied; "Oh, no! it is in Jesus alone, my blessed Saviour, that I put my trust! I once thought I was right; I lived like my neighbours, and imagined if I did not steal, or lie, or do other great sins, that I was a good Christian; but I found there was a difference,"—he repeated, "I found there was a difference;" implying that he had discovered that true religion was a very different thing to that mere formal and outward profession of it with which he had been at one time contented. Though other men looked back upon his life as blameless and worthy of approbation, he viewed it with opposite feelings. "Do not be like me," he said; "do not be like me. I used to rise from my bed in the morning, and to lie down at night like one of the brutes. At one time I did not think of praying, or of thanking Him who preserved my life." Such was his genuine and deep humility. He had no other ground of confidence than the finished work of that Divine Redeemer, who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Secondly. His love to the souls of others. To any one even casually present, it must have appeared evident that he was more occupied in thinking of others than of himself. His tenderness and affection to the members of his family, which had always been conspicuous, shone very brightly in his last moments. Over their souls he seemed to watch with the most intense interest. "Oh, that they may all meet me in heaven!" were words constantly on his lips. "Take heed to yourselves," he said to them, "take heed to yourselves, that you may come to me, my dear and tender children." But his love was not confined to them, it seemed to burn towards the whole family of the human race. Frequently was he heard to say, "Love everybody."—"Love all the world;" and, again, with peculiar emphasis, he added, "Love all the world." It appeared as though the love of Christ had been fully shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. He seemed at times unable to find language sufficiently powerful to express the strength of his affections towards the souls of others. On one occasion he forcibly exclaimed, "If there is a man upon the face of the earth whom I could persuade to turn to the Lord, if I could get out of this bed I would creep to him on my hands and on my knees. If I thought I could be the means of saving one soul, I would willingly do or suffer anything."

Let those declare to whom he so earnestly ad-

dressed himself, and whom he so anxiously pressed to give themselves up to the service of their God, let them declare whether he regarded the salvation of their souls as a light and unimportant matter. No, my brethren, to him, time seemed as nothing—Eternity was the great and solemn reality on which his eye was fixed. Whatever had no bearing on the world to come, was to him of secondary importance. To show how indispensable he considered it that every one should lay to heart the things that belong unto his peace before they are for ever hid from his eyes, I may quote a striking answer which he made from Scripture, when I asked the following question:—"What advice would you give, as a dying man, to the young persons now present in full health?"—immediately he replied, earnestly turning toward them, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."

Thirdly. His delight in prayer and communion with his God.

Prayer and praise seemed to be more to him than meat and drink. Scarcely were any words heard to escape from his lips, in which there was not something that referred to his Creator and Redeemer. He took especial delight in giving utterance to his grateful feelings. "Glory be to God" was the warm and fervent ejaculation of his heart in the time of sickness, in the prospect of death, and even to his last moment. From morn to even he occupied himself

in communion with his God: and through the lonely watches of the night he was often heard lifting up his feeble voice to sing the praises of the Lord. As if his spirit were anticipating the song of the redeemed in heaven, whose blessed company he was so soon to enter, he would often cry out, "Oh, praise the Lord! Bless ye the Lord. To his name be all the glory!"

When one asked him whether he had found most real joy in the service of God, or in the pleasures of the world, he exclaimed, "Oh, there is nothing to be compared to the service of Christ! I have more joy and happiness in knowing God and in following his commandments than all that ever I tasted in the world! All the pleasures I had in the world, never gave me lasting satisfaction, but here, in loving Jesus, I find all happiness and lasting peace!"

Such, my dear friends, was the death-bed of your fellow-parishioner. I have described three particulars in his christian character. First, Humility; Secondly, Love to the souls of others; and Thirdly, Delight in prayer, and in communion with his God. Words are unequal to bring before you the fulness of his joy—the confidence of that expectation with which he anticipated a happy admission into heaven, —or the sweet and most composed manner in which he said, "I am not afraid to die; if it be the Lord's will, I am willing to depart." Who could have

stood by the bedside of that dying Christian, and not almost gladly have exchanged places with him for so great a hope of glory, or, without exclaiming each one for himself, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" Oh then my friends, let our lives also be "righteous," and let our remaining days on earth be spent in the service of the same Saviour, and then shall we experience the same peace in death.

In this experience of your fellow-parishioner many important, instructive, and encouraging lessons are set before us.

The fact here exhibited, that it is possible for a human being to encounter death without fear, nay, to triumph over it, should animate us all to overcome that fear of death which is inherent in our natures, and which, more or less, pervades every human being. Let us courageously follow the Captain of our salvation, and those faithful soldiers of the cross, who have fought the good fight of faith. Let us imitate their good examples, and instead of yielding to the last enemy, let us stir up our hearts to obtain the victory, so that we also may be able to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Let us do this, remembering that all our strength and confidence must be derived from our Lord and Saviour. Here we see that an individual, of a spotless life before men, did not expect to be saved by any good works which he had

himself performed, but only and entirely through the atonement made, and the righteousness wrought out for him, by his blessed Saviour. Let this fact be strongly imprinted on our memories, that so not one of us may presume to think, that because he may not be guilty and unworthy before men, therefore he is innocent and acceptable before God. Rather let us humble ourselves, as did this heaven-taught man; and let us be ready to renounce our own righteousness, and all dependence on our own good works, and to rest upon that only perfect work, of which it was said upon the cross, "It is finished." Let those who are tempted to sorrow and despair on account of the sins they have committed, and who are ready to imagine that they may never be able to overcome their last enemy, be also encouraged. Here was a man unblamable amongst his fellows, yet trusting only to the common "Saviour of all men:" and to that same Saviour each of us may go, however unworthy we be; and in that same Saviour's strength, all of us may conquer, however weak in ourselves. "This is a faithful saying," saith St. Paul, "and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Receive then this Saviour as the only foundation of a sinner's hopes, thus will your death-bed exhibit at once an assurance of salvation, and a genuine humility of spirit. You will possess great peace, because you know that Jesus is a great Saviour.

You will possess great humility, because you feel yourself to be a great sinner. You will mourn when you reflect on what you yourself have done, and you will rejoice when you remember all that your Saviour has accomplished. The more you look to yourself, the more will you feel abased in your own conscience. The more you look to Jesus, the stronger will you grow in love to his person, and in confident reliance on his promises. This love to Christ will inspire you with a love to your fellow-creatures, and this experience of satisfaction in Him as your portion, will make you long to tell others of the rich treasure you have found, and to bring them also to be partakers. The higher your love to your Redeemer rises, the greater will your love to man become; and the more your love to them increases, the more willing will you be to suffer any privation to promote their welfare. Like your blessed Master, you will, in some measure, love your fellow-men, even unto the death; and like him of whom we have now been speaking you will, though expiring in weakness, be willing to entreat them even on your bended knees, to turn to the Saviour of their souls; and to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near.

We have seen that his greatest delight was in the exercises of prayer and praise, and in communion with his God. But, my friends, was this only his death-bed experience? No, it was the daily practice

of his life from the time that he first attended to the things that belonged to his salvation. He was not like the multitude who leave their prayers to a dying hour, and imagine that they shall then have time to repent of their sins, and turn to the Redeemer. Instead of lying down in melancholy and despair, like most of those who trust to a mere death-bed repentance, his last moments were enlivened with light and peace and joy, and his heart was sustained with an animating hope. All was serene and calm within. Throughout the ten or twelve last years of his life he abounded in prayer. It was as his meat and his drink. He loved it. He took delight in intercession. He had constant recourse to it. Often has the partner of his bosom found him in a retired corner for devotion. Not once nor twice had he forgotten to take his regular meals, his usual rest. He was altogether a man of prayer. When working in his barn or in his fields, he often sought private opportunities, when he thought no one could observe him, that he might pray to the God of his life. And on the road when journeying, and at daily labour when his hands were occupied with work, his mind has been busily engaged in meditating on his ascended Lord, in sending up the fervent desires of his heart after Him, and in holding secret but fervent communion with the Father of his spirit.

Having now given you an instance of the power of Divine grace in an individual of advanced age,

I wish to direct your attention to its saving efficacy in the case of another who was beginning life. Let no one imagine that religion is fitted only to the aged and infirm. It is truly applicable to all conditions, and equally suited to all ages. The tender child, the blooming youth, the robust man, have alike experienced that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and that all her paths are peace. To the sanguine mind of youth just entering upon life, imagination may indeed present the world as all fair and glittering; yet the gospel can also present to its view a fairer world on high, the loveliness of which by far surpasses the brightest pictures which this earth can furnish. The eye of sense may gaze upon the inviting scenery of wood and water, vale and mountain; the eye of faith can behold more enchanting scenery, where the leaves never fade, and the crystal waters are never ruffled, where the smiling valleys are not obscured by a misty veil, and the verdant mountains frown not with their barren rocks. The eye of sense may fasten with delight on gaiety, and gold, and grandeur, and survey with desire the assembled throng, the accumulated fortune, and the royal court: the eye of faith can fasten with rapture on gladness, grace, and glory, and survey with anticipative joy the company of angels and of the redeemed, the riches of eternity, and the throne of God. The eye of sense may fix on friends, and relatives, and neighbours, and beam

with kindness on a companion, a brother, or a father: the eye of faith can fix on friends that never fail, on relatives that never die, and neighbours that are never separated; and it can contemplate, with ever-growing satisfaction, a heavenly Comforter who is for ever near, a gracious Brother who will never leave, and an eternal Father who will ever nourish and protect. Thus, my dear friends, the life of faith is ten thousand times more blessed than the life of sense—the joys of heaven are infinitely more desirable than the joys of the world. And this life is now to be inherited, these joys are now to be possessed. God debars no age, no sex, no party, from happiness. He invites, nay, he commands, all, both young and old, to live now the life of faith, and to rejoice now with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The instruction and consolations of the gospel are not only open to all, they are also suited to every age and station. Religion is designed to gladden alike the cottage of the peasant and the palace of the monarch. The Bible is addressed to the youngest, as well as to the most advanced in years. The inspired apostle was taught not only to say, "I write unto you fathers;" but also, "I write unto you young men:" and again, with similar two-fold earnestness, "I write unto you little children," 1 John ii. 12. The word of inspiration from the beginning has thus admonished each of

us in our earliest years; "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccles. xii. 1. And Divine wisdom has thus encouraged the youthful inquirers; "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me," Prov. viii. 17. The blessed Saviour, in the days of his flesh, took especial delight in those "little ones" that believed in him, and set one of them in the midst as a pattern to his disciples, Matt. xviii. 1—14. And now we shall learn by the following narrative that He still rejoices over all those that fear him, and more than compensates their souls with gladness for all that they may be supposed to lose of this world by an early death, or by an early devotedness to his service:

Miss Thomas, of Tregideon, was about twenty-one years of age when it pleased the Lord to take her to himself. She was of a modest and retiring disposition, and from a child exhibited everything that is amiable and obedient in a daughter. Her parents and friends can testify that she was strictly truthful in all her words. No lightness or vanity marked her conduct; no vain love of dress was ever discernible in her. She evinced a beautiful propriety and consistency in all things beyond her years. She desired to appear always according to her station, neither beneath nor beyond it; and exhibited rather that ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. At this time, however, she had no spiritual apprehension of Divine

things. We speak at present of her natural character.

It was during the period of illness that it pleased the Lord to open her eyes to her state as a sinner. The first symptoms of consumption had manifested themselves in her delicate frame, and after much doubt and anxiety as to her case, it was found that medical skill could afford no remedy. Her cough increased, her strength diminished, and at last it became necessary to confine her to one apartment. For some time she had been secretly seeking that Lord who never said to any of the seed of Jacob seek ye me in vain. She had been brought to feel the burden of her sins, but she never passed through those depths of spiritual anguish on account of sin which some have described. It was rather a silent and gradual, but sure, work which the Divine Spirit was carrying on in her soul. With a heavy heart she had often listened to the interesting memoirs of departed Christians, and earnestly wished that their happy experience was her own also. To obtain relief to her burdened conscience, and joy to her wounded heart, seemed to her the chief object of her life. Her prayers for mercy and grace, for light and consolation, were diligently offered. Often when she lay sleepless at night, she would be engaged in earnest prayer. She was a sincere seeker, and that faithful God who has promised to satisfy the longing soul, and to fill the hungry soul with goodness,

fulfilled his gracious promises in her experience, abundantly answered her prayers, and rejoiced her heart with the light of his countenance.

The reading of the sacred Scriptures was the blessed instrument of her spiritual deliverance. Grace was given her to believe, to appropriate, and to enjoy, the record of salvation. The twelfth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah proved to her soul "as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the clear shining after rain." This most beautiful, most comforting portion of the holy volume was brought home with power to her heart by the Lord the Spirit; and "therefore with joy" she was enabled to "draw water out of the wells of salvation" when she could say with the prophet, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation."

For the first time in her life, Miss Thomas was now able to overcome her natural timidity, and freely to express the past and present state of her mind. Great pains had been taken to explain to her the gospel plan of salvation. The difference between the work of Christ *for* us by his death, and the work of Christ *in* us by his Spirit, had been repeatedly pointed out; and now she could say that

she understood and felt the difference. The former alone she now saw constituted her *title* to heaven, and by the latter she now knew was her *meetness* to be wrought out for the inheritance of the saints in light. She fully declared that the perfect work of her Saviour's righteousness finished on the cross, was the only and the all-sufficient ground on which she hoped for pardon and acceptance before God. While thus she joyfully relied on the work done for her, she exhibited at the same time a beautiful diffidence, a holy jealousy, in regard to the work done in her. She possessed, indeed, great peace, because she always knew that her Saviour's work for her was sure; but she had also great searchings of heart, because she could not always discern the work of the Spirit within her as bright and manifest as she desired.

It was most truly satisfactory to mark these evidences of Divine grace in the tenderness of her conscience. Every word of God seemed to find a willing and immediate response in her heart. Beyond her strength, she would strive to fulfil whatever she conceived to be the revealed will. Her apprehension of sin became scriptural and acute. She felt that there was a baseness, a vileness, in sin which language could not describe. Coldness, ingratitude, and wandering of heart, she viewed as crimes, because committed against the "God of love." To forget her heavenly Father even for a moment in her thoughts, and not to seek his glory in all her words

and actions, seemed to her so unlike a child, that she abhorred herself on account of it. "It is my constant prayer to God," she often exclaimed, "that he would keep me from sinning against him."

While thus the work of grace was surely and beautifully developing itself in her own soul, she became deeply interested and anxious as to the spiritual welfare of the souls of others. Weak and feeble as she was, she would often exhort them in a most humble, affectionate, and earnest, manner to "taste and see that the Lord is good." On one occasion, when my beloved friend and curate, Mr. Stewart, who was unremittingly attentive to her spiritual welfare, was conversing with Miss Thomas on the amazing love of God to sinners, she suddenly called to her remembrance that an aged woman was that day assisting in the house. Immediately she desired her to be sent for, and entreated that she might be faithfully warned; remarking that she had always been very careless as to her soul, and too careful as to the world. Observing that the faithful admonition did not appear to produce the desired impression, she could not restrain the yearnings of her heart over this aged female, but, as speaking from the verge of the grave, earnestly besought her to seek the Lord while he could be found, and to call upon him while he was near. May the Lord grant that the word then spoken may be found in the great day, not to have been spoken in vain!

Throughout the entire period of her illness, Miss Thomas manifested the most patient and cheerful submission to the will of her Lord in all things. She was entirely confined to her bed for only ten days, and suffered much as her end approached. A few days before her death, when the conversation turned on the subject of her departure, some one expressed a hope, and asked her if she were ready for her call? She seemed at first startled by the searching question, and paused as if examining her heart before she ventured to reply. After a little she meekly and beautifully said, "I fear that I am not ripe; but I think God will make me ready when he sees fit to take me." This faithful expectation from a covenant God was by no means disappointed. On the last night of her earthly pilgrimage, though suffering most acutely from her cough, she enjoyed the sweetest peace and most heavenly composure in her mind. In the near prospect of heaven, death was stripped of all his terrors. A "desire to depart and to be with Christ" took possession of her breast. She said to her attendant, "Do you think it will be long?" and when answered, "Whenever it is the Lord's will," she immediately replied, "Yes, oh yes; we cannot die when *we* will." Shortly after, in a most solemn and affectionate manner, she took farewell of all her beloved relatives and friends —she assured them all of her present peace and of her hope of everlasting happiness; and then falling

asleep in Jesus, her last words died away with her breath, as she sweetly said,—

> "There we shall shine, and shout, and sing,
> And make the heavenly arches ring
> With loud hosannahs to our King.
> Glory! hallelujah!"

Thus, my dear friends, I have endeavoured to communicate to you some of the interesting and instructive lessons which, as your Pastor, I obtained at the bedside of two of your departing neighbours. Other cases might be added did space permit, but I trust these instances will serve to incite within each of you an earnest desire to enjoy the same peace and consolation in your own dying hours. To this end it is of the very first importance that you should fully understand the difference, and feel the harmony, between the work of Christ *for* you and the work of the Spirit *in* you. Multitudes of professing Christians spend many years of their lives in perplexity and doubt as to the salvation of their souls. Ignorance of this doctrinal distinction is a very prevalent cause. They do not clearly perceive the difference between their title to heaven, and their meetness for it. And in anxiously weighing their eternal prospects, they make a wrong use of their meetness, or their want of meetness, for the kingdom of glory. If they perceive any good work of the new nature in their hearts, they are tempted to feel elated, and to build upon it as if it were their

title: and again, when they perceive the workings of their old nature, and a painful sense of unworthiness presses on their minds, they are tempted to despair as if now they had lost their title to heaven. What a deliverance would it be to such individuals were they instructed that they are such innate sinners that they must never regard any good thing in themselves, even the work of the Spirit, as good enough to constitute their title, their foundation for the hope of heaven. The good in our hearts and lives is tainted and imperfect. It is the good which existed in the heart and life of Jesus of Nazareth which constitutes our righteousness, our foundation, our title. We are not, then, to go about seeking for a title to heaven as though it were nowhere else to be found but in ourselves. We are to go for it only to Him who is for this very purpose denominated, "The Lord our Righteousness"—for nowhere else through the wide universe can there be found a sinner's title to salvation. It is quite the reverse, however, in regard to our meetness, which can be wrought nowhere else than in our own hearts. And it is there where we are to look, and look diligently, for the works and fruits of the Spirit. And when we see them not, we are to be humbled, and mourn, and weep. We are to become more earnest in prayer for the Holy Spirit, and more watchful not to grieve Him, or quench his convictions. And when we see these fruits in any measure manifested

in our hearts, we are not to be puffed up as though we were now made safe for eternity: we are, on the contrary, to thank the Lord for them as proofs of our connection with the true Vine, and to remember that our security, our strength, our fruitfulness, our very life, as branches, lie in Him who says, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me," John xv. 4. The happy consciousness of a good work wrought within us, is not to be substituted for a joyful dependence on the good work wrought for us. And, again, reliance on the finished work of Christ, is not to be substituted for the inward experience of the continuous work of the Spirit. Each is to be kept in its own place, that their harmony may not be disturbed. Yet, alas! many amiable and excellent persons displace these two beautiful chords of truth, and pass their lives in a perpetual discord between hopes and fears. They look within, when they should look without. And, again, they look without, when they should look within. They put a fruit of the Spirit, in the place of the work of Christ. They look for meetness before they have found a title. They seek for fruit before they have planted the tree. They wish to feel well, before they have believed well. They put feeling for faith, and faith for feeling. Yet in natural order faith stands first, and feeling follows. We first believe the good tidings,

or the sorrowful communication brought to us, and then we either rejoice or mourn over the truth of that which we believe. As in natural, so is it in spiritual things. We hear, by the gospel, of a Saviour; and if we believe in what we hear, we shall rejoice in what we believe. Living on the blessed truth, our life will flow on in a blessed manner. But, ere long, our hopes, our joys, our own personal feelings, become the objects of our attention. We say, "O how happy I am." Then afterwards, when love has cooled a little, we say, "O how happy I was." And again, we exclaim, "O how happy I should be, if I felt as I once did." Now in all this, there is a looking to feeling, and not to faith—a looking to self, and not to Christ. It may be all too true. We may indeed experience great discomfort, we may feel restless and dissatisfied, and may earnestly and intensely desire to return to our "first love;" but nevertheless, all the while we may overlook the fact, that this first love was produced by believing the truth, and that the only way to reproduce love, is to return to that truth which produced it at first. Instead, then, of labouring in the pool of our own heart—which our every attempt to cleanse, renders only more dark and troubled—we should go directly to the spring beyond, and seek the kindly flow of its unceasing stream to wash the corruption away, and to fill the pool again with pure and limpid water. As a pool

is cleansed and filled at first by an upper spring, so are our hearts by the truth of the gospel; and the only way to keep the heart full and limpid, is to have the stream of gospel truth continually flowing into it. It is by this means we must endeavour to preserve at all times true peace of mind. We must not merely say, "O how I feel"—or "not feel," but when empty, defiled, cold, and languid, we should go to the spring above as we did at first, and say, "Is there indeed a Saviour? Did he die for me? Has he really borne my sins in his own body on the tree? O good news! Is he now willing to receive such a sinner as I am?" Such meditations bring in the stream into the pool. By believing these blessed truths of a Saviour's love, and of his redeeming work, the languor is removed, and good feelings begin again to rise and to play within the breast. Brooding over our wrong state of heart can never set it right. Run therefore to the gospel at all times for peace and strength. Thus you will escape out of that state of spiritual declension in which others too long continue. The "truth as it is in Jesus" is indeed a perennial spring. Faith is the mouth by which we drink in the living water. And it is truth, and not feeling, that we have principally to do with. It is truth which we must stand upon, and not on the evanescent states of our own minds. Truth, when embraced, will always produce its corresponding emotions and feelings in our

hearts. If, then, we wish to feel, we must first believe. If we wish to renew our feelings, we must first renew our faith. If we wish to have always happy feelings, we must have always a lively faith. Mark these declarations of Scripture: "The truth shall make you free," John viii. 32. "Purifying their hearts by faith," Acts xv. 9. "Sanctify them through thy truth," John xvii. 17. "By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain," 1 Cor. xv. 2. "He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." 2 Peter i. 9. The Saviour hath said that in the knowledge of God is our eternal life, John xvii. 3. And "man liveth not by bread only, but by every word of God." Luke iv. 4. The prophet Jeremiah also thus testifies his experience; "Thy words were found and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and the rejoicing of my heart," Jer. xv. 16. Because God loves us, because Jesus died for us, let us continually turn to Him as the only fountain of our peace. Hearken to these words of the Patriarch, "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee," Job xxii. 21. Thus only can the soul be "satisfied, as with marrow and fatness," and our praises rendered "with joyful lips, when we remember God, and meditate upon Him." Ps. lxiii.

Do not however misunderstand. We do not dis-

card feeling. We wish only to keep it in its proper place. We seek to show you the best, and only efficacious, remedy against a wrong state of feeling. Never, for one moment, would we insinuate that we should not mourn over spiritual languor and declensions. Most assuredly we should, and that bitterly. But never do we mourn with true, godly, healing, sorrow, till through our very tears we "look on Him whom we have pierced, and mourn for Him," and for His sufferings, as well as for ourselves and for our own short comings. Yes, we must bitterly feel that we have once pierced His body on the cross, and that we are now continually piercing His spirit by our distrust and our ingratitude. Thus, by constantly "looking unto Jesus," will the icy hardness of our hearts be broken up, our spiritual chill dispelled, and the warm vital flow of love again move within us. Thus, with the Apostle, shall we be brought to feel that the love of Christ in dying for us, is the grand constraining motive on our hearts to live for Him. 2 Cor. v. Our *feelings* will thus be kept right by that *faith* which made them right at first, and we shall learn that we must live on God, and not on ourselves, on what He feels toward us, rather than on what we feel toward him. And thus shall we be able to say with the young dying believer of whom we have just read, "I have been tempted, I am often tempted, but I can always find comfort in Christ."

May the Lord Christ thus be to each of you my

dear friends, your "All in all"—your Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the ending of all your hopes and joys. I write these things unto you most earnestly desiring that you may be "built up in Christ,"—be "rooted and grounded" in his love—and "established" in that faith which giveth peace.

Our duty is to live the life of faith and not of sense. "Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame; who mind earthly things." I pray God to save them from this awful state, and I beseech each of you to consider the time past of your lives, more than sufficient to have wrought the will of the flesh. Henceforth to you, my dear friends, to live, be Christ, and then to die will be gain. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Be diligent, therefore, to obtain the "true riches." It is "high time to awake out of sleep" and spiritual indifference. The voice of the Lord is continually addressing us. His word, his providence, the strivings of his Spirit, the admonitions of conscience, our own sicknesses and the deaths of friends, the changes and partings we experience, the flight of one year and the arrival of another, are as so many voices saying to each of us, "Oh that thou wouldest know, even thou at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy

peace, before they be for ever hid from thine eyes." Shall we not then at last take warning? When God graciously continues to call, shall we still ungraciously refuse to hear? Far be it from us, my dear friends, thus to requite the Lord. Let this be our constant and earnest prayer; "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"

I earnestly pray God, to enable you thus to *apply* your hearts. And whatever may be your age, or station, or under whatsoever circumstances you may be placed, may heavenly wisdom guide, and heavenly grace sustain your souls. My thoughts often present you before me in one or other of two conditions, either as suffering the trials, or as discharging the duties, of life; and to each of you in these several positions, I would humbly and affectionately address a few words of concluding admonition.

First. To those under trial, and, alas, all of you, either are, or will be, called to pass through one or more of the various afflictions to which flesh is heir; —to all such I would say, remember, my dear friends, that resignation to the will of God is your incumbent duty and your exalted privilege. In a world of sorrows like this, there can be no true peace without it. We say resignation is our duty and our privilege. Are we not the creatures whom the Lord's hand hath made? Are we not dependent upon him for life, and breath, and all things? Has

he not a right to do what he will with his own? The King of Heaven is obeyed by all the angels of heaven, with glad and grateful hearts. These blessed beings never murmur—they never know what disappointment means. Their will is never crossed by God, because his will is never crossed by them. And such, my dear friends, is our duty, and will be also our privilege. We should not only obey God and submit to his dispensations because we must, but because we will. Oh, what cold and heartless resignation is that which merely says, "I must submit." Even the devils can affirm as much. An angel does not simply acknowledge that he must, but he delights to declare that he will submit, and that the law of his God is the joy of his heart. Oh, then, let us view it not only as our duty, but our privilege, our honour, and our joy, to give up our wills continually to the will of God. He is the Creator, we are the creatures. He is the Ruler, we are the subjects. He is the Master, we are the servants. He is the Father, we are the children. Shall a child oppose itself to a father's will? Shall a servant prefer his own way before that appointed by his master? Is it not the safety and the happiness of subjects to show all loyalty and obedience to their lawful sovereign? And shall not the creatures of the dust bow themselves continually before Him who called them out of it, and gave them being by his word? Who is this heavenly Creator? He

is not an enemy that we should fear him—He is not a hard master that we should refuse to serve him—He is not a capricious ruler that we should reluctantly obey him—He is not a forbidding father that we should be unable to love him. On the contrary, our God is a God abundant in goodness. He is a merciful Creator—a tender Master—a gracious Ruler—and a loving Father. We know that he condescends to feel interested in all our circumstances—that he always seeks our benefit—and that he will not withhold anything from us that is really good. He is also a holy God. He never issues a command that is not holy, and just, and good. All his acts are planned by wisdom, executed with kindness, and adorned with goodness. Even his most dark and trying dispensations are blessings in disguise. Sickness and pains, poverty and perplexity, afflictions and bereavements, life and death, shall all be made to work together for good to them that love God. Shall we then, my dear friends, if we love God at all, ever presume to murmur or repine? Oh no! Let us pray for the grace of a cordial resignation. Let us continually submit ourselves, and say, "Thy will O God is the best. Thou only art the wisest, and thy wisdom alone is unerring. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Thy will be done with me and mine. Thy will be done in our bodies and in our souls. Thy will be done in pains, and losses, and disappoint-

ments. Thy will be done on the bed of sickness, and on the couch of death. Thy will be done in time and in eternity!"

Secondly. Those amongst you who are engaged in the active duties of life, I would beseech to acknowledge God in all their ways. This likewise is both your duty and your privilege: "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," 1 Cor. x. 31. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him," Col. iii. 17.

Therefore, my dear friends, in the various stages of your earthly history, and especially when you are called to enter on any important business, or when conflicting calls of duty agitate your minds, and plunge you in perplexity, remember this injunction, —"In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he will direct thy paths," Prov. iii. 6. Apply to him for advice with equal, yea with greater, earnestness and frequency than you do to your dearest earthly friend. Search his holy word for instruction, and endeavour to regulate all your plans by its sacred precepts. Be frequent and be fervent in your supplications at the throne of grace, and strive to have all your thoughts influenced by the power of prayer. Be careful to mark, and diligent to pursue, all the leadings of Divine Providence, and seek for the grace of patience to follow and not to precede its move-

ments. And let me entreat you to be faithful in the use, and unwearied in the application of all lawful means; and "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest."

Live in this busy world as *believers*—as those who *believe* that there is another and a better world; and who know that they have there a Friend whose love is unchangeable, whose resources are inexhaustible, whose wisdom is unerring, and whose power is irresistible. Be encouraged then to acknowledge this Friend in all your ways. In every thought that rises within your mind,—in every desire that occupies your breast,—in every plan and purpose which you form through life,—in every business you transact amongst your fellows,—in every place to which you are called at home or abroad,—and in every varied act of thy passing life—acknowledge God. Begin, continue, and end all things in him. The Lord our God is faithful. He has fulfilled his word to a thousand generations. Be thou also faithful. He who led Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will lead thee, O Christian. He who conducted the children of Israel in all their wanderings, will also direct thy steps to the heavenly Canaan. Thy duty is to cast the past upon the mercy, and to commit the future to the care of thy heavenly Father, and to occupy the present in acknowledging Him in all thy ways by

daily acts of grateful service. What then shouldest thou fear when thus leaning on thy God? Of whom shouldest thou be afraid? Is not his mercy abundant to pardon? Is not his wisdom sufficient to direct? Is not his power sufficient to defend? And are not his resources sufficient to supply? This day, then, my dear friends,—those of you who really believe and trust in God, whatever may be your circumstances in your family, in your business, or in your health; are you as a master or a servant, as a husband or a wife, as a parent or a child, and do you look anxiously forward to some feared evil to-morrow, or next day, or the coming year, acknowledge ye your God, and he will direct your paths to-morrow, and guide you safely through the coming trial of every day and week and month and year of your appointed pilgrimage, till he bring you to the promised land above, into the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy. Unspeakably blessed is the man who thus commits himself implicitly to his God,—who casts the past, the present, and the future on Him who careth for him, and who places as it were the *carte blanche* of his fortunes and his wishes in the hand of Providence to be filled up as Divine love and Divine wisdom may see most fit!

That this blessedness may be yours, my dear friends, is my earnest prayer. God Almighty pour upon you all his richest blessings. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost bless you

in your bodies and in your souls, in your basket and in your store, in your children and in your several dwellings. May His providence watch over you through all the wanderings of this chequered life. May His gracious presence accompany each of you through the valley of the shadow of death. And, finally, in the mansions of heaven, in the temple of glory, may we all meet together, and sing the song of the redeemed, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Patrixbourne Vicarage, near Canterbury,
Christmas, 1846.

FAREWELL SERMON

AT CURY.

SUNDAY MORNING, 23RD AUGUST, 1846.

REVELATION xxii. 21.

"*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*"

FOR a few past sabbaths, you will remember, my beloved brethren, I have endeavoured to throw into the compass of single sermons as comprehensive a view as possible of the great leading truths of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I have done so with the anxious desire that my latest ministrations among you should bear the impress of the whole revealed will of God. For this purpose I have preached to you, especially on the two latest occasions, *first*, on the temporal, and, *secondly*, on the spiritual mercies with which God has blessed you. In regard to the first, I sought to show you that everything on earth around you testifies of the goodness of the Lord: your

health, your food, the grass beneath your feet, the heavens above your head, the air you breathe, the providential deliverances you experience, and every moment and measure of happiness which you enjoy, all demand your liveliest gratitude, and most fervent affection for your God. My brethren, your creation, your preservation, and all the blessings of this life, are as so many voices saying to each of you, "Love thy Creator—love thy Preserver—love thy Benefactor." By all these temporal mercies have I besought you to love and to serve your God; and by all these mercies would I again implore you to live to his glory while you live on earth. I have solemnly warned you, and again would I repeat the warning, that all these mercies, unless rightly received and used, will only aggravate your guilt. If you do not love and serve that heavenly Friend who so graciously bestows these blessings, they will rise up as witnesses against you at a future period, and leave you without the slightest shadow of excuse in the dreadful day of judgment.

In the second place, your attention was directed last sabbath to the many and inestimable blessings of a spiritual nature which God has richly supplied for your immortal souls. I reminded you that the goodness of the Lord has provided you a Saviour to redeem you by his blood; and that he has sent down his own Spirit from heaven to sanctify you by his grace. Various other spiritual mercies were

next enumerated; as, for instance, that you were privileged to be born in a Christian land—that you have the Holy Scriptures, the hallowed sabbath, the house of God, and all the various means of grace within your reach. I assured you that the throne of grace was ever open to receive your petitions for mercy, and that the promises of forgiveness and acceptance were freely and fully proclaimed to every penitent sinner who should draw near in the name of Jesus. I declared to all such, that the presence and the protection of their God would assuredly be granted to them through life; that the hope of glory would be vouchsafed to comfort them through the valley of the shadow of death; and that throughout eternity they would be admitted to the blissful presence of the Most High, and become partakers of the pleasures that are at his right hand for evermore.

Having thus endeavoured to set before you the temporal and the spiritual blessings which the God of mercy has vouchsafed, it only remains to me, my brethren, in this last discourse, that I should give utterance to my own fervent affection towards you in the words of the text: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." These last words of the sacred volume may not inappropriately become the last words of your minister. The prayer of the Apostle for those to whom he wrote, is the earnest prayer of your pastor for those whom

he is now for the last time addressing, yea, and for all the people of this parish. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for every one of you is that you may be saved; therefore I pray, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

These closing words of the Book of Revelation form the concluding benediction of the apostle. The minister of God left his blessing upon his people. The terms of that blessing are at once brief and comprehensive. St. John speaks of the "grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,"—and he designs thereby to invoke his favour, his approbation, and his blessing, together with all the gifts which that favour may bestow, upon the Christians of whom he now takes farewell.

He prays, that this grace may be "WITH *them all*," that is, may rest upon them;—be fully conferred by the Lord—be abundantly enjoyed by the believers—and everlastingly abide with them ALL; not only with one, or several, or many, but with ALL.

In humble dependence upon the help and teaching of the Spirit of God, I would now seek to direct your attention to this passage of sacred Scripture under two points of consideration; namely, the *nature* and the *extent* of this apostolic benediction.

First: The nature of the apostle's blessing seems

to be clearly exhibited by the simple words in which it is expressed, "THE GRACE of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." The apostle St. John had constantly testified to all to whom he ever wrote or preached of the glorious doctrine of *Divine grace*. It formed the prominent topic of his writings—the first and last subject of his ministrations. "Grace and truth" he averred, "came by Jesus Christ:" whom he also described as having "dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." Grace signifies favour. It is a term of constant occurrence in the sacred Scriptures. It is employed to denote not only the favour, but also the *effects* of that favour, the blessings and benefits which it confers.

Grace also, when spoken of in reference to sinners like us, denotes undeserved favour. We are all guilty—we have forfeited the favour of God.—Our deservings are only wrath and condemnation. The Lord might have left us all to perish without the slightest charge of injustice. But instead of being described in the volume of truth as very wroth and full of displeasure, he is declared to be "gracious and full of compassion."

He deals not with us after our sins, neither does he reward us according to our iniquities. The grace of God is sovereign and free. He loves us, not because of anything in us that is lovely, but for his own mercy's sake. There is no reason why he should

regard us with compassion: yet his heart overflows with good-will even to the creatures that have rebelled against him. "He willeth not the death of a sinner." And to prove this, he has given his own Son to die in the sinner's stead. The Lord Jesus in life and death is the proof, the token, and the measure of the love of God.

The invisible good-will of the Most High, obtained its suitable expression in the sacrifice of his own Son. Hence the Scriptures so commonly speak of the grace of God the Son. Love is attributed to God the Father. Grace is love, not merely as it exists in the heart, but as it is uttered in word, or manifested by act. Grace is the expression of love. Grace is love, brought near to man and declared to him by Christ. We are indebted to God the Father for his great love toward us, and we are indebted to God the Son for his gracious exhibition of that love in becoming our surety. When therefore the apostle prays that the grace of the Lord Jesus may be with the Church, he prays for an inestimable blessing. He knew that that grace not only originated in love, but also embodied all the benefits which that love might bestow. The grace of the Son comprehends the love of the Father; and the apostle praying for the one, brings down also the other upon all true Christians to whom he wrote. How vast, how amazing are this grace and love Divine! Think of the grace of the Lord Jesus, in taking

your nature, bearing your sins, suffering your punishment, and dying your death! Think of the love of the Father in giving his dear and only Son to a life of suffering, and a death of ignominy, for your salvation! If God has thus loved you, what will he not also give for your eternal benefit? If Christ has been thus gracious, what will not his grace vouchsafe still to bestow upon your souls? Behold, then, how rich, how precious, is the grace of the Lord Jesus. Its nature surpasses description, and is only to be equalled by the greatness of its extent; which is the second point proposed for our consideration—"Be with you ALL."

The heart of the apostle overflowed with love. There was not one amongst all the believers to whom he wrote for whom he entertained not a Christian good-will. He knew that the grace of Christ was indispensable for all, and that without it the strongest believer would become as the weakest babe: therefore he would exclude none from the benefit of his supplications. In the fulness and the sincerity of his heart, he comprehends all in this last public prayer which he offers unto God: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you ALL. Amen."

Such, my beloved brethren, is the earnest prayer of your unworthy minister for you, and for all the people of his charge, and for all who hear him this day. The love of God the Father manifested in God the

Son, be with you all. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with the young and with the old! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with the rich and with the poor! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with every husband and wife, every parent and child, every master and servant in this parish! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all those who love and serve him in sincerity and in truth; that they may love and serve him more fervently and joyfully every succeeding day of their lives! And oh, may it also be with those who are still loving and serving the world, that they may become the loving and obedient children of their heavenly Father; and thus, converted by the grace of God, may they become heirs of his eternal glory!

BRETHREN, THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN.

Most sincerely do I thank you for all your kindness bestowed on me and mine, since we first entered into this parish. In uninterrupted harmony and affection have we lived together with you, and ever shall we be deeply interested in your present and eternal welfare. Deeply do I lament the failings and short-comings of my ministry. Frequent and severe prostrations of health have deprived me of the power, personally, to do all I wished to do amongst you; but I have sought to compensate for my own weakness and infirmities, by securing faithful fellow-

labourers to supply my lack of service towards you. I earnestly trust, that in the great day our work and labour shall not be found to have been in vain in the Lord.

Over some, who are now sleeping in the dust around this church, I have had reason for spiritual joy. Peace be to the memory of dear departed parishioners.

Over some, who are now alive, and walking in the fear of God, I have cause of thanksgiving, for pleasant fellowship in the gospel. "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Over others I have cause to mourn. They still cleave to their covetousness, or to their love of a present evil world. Oh, that I might now warn all such as with my latest breath! Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? Rush not on to ruin. Except ye repent, ye shall all perish. Oh, that the Lord the Spirit may grant you repentance to the acknowledging of the truth!

I implore and beseech you all who hear me this day, to live and to act as Christians, worthy of your high vocation—in all godliness and honesty—adorning the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. I charge you, young and old, to flee from every open and every secret sin. I beseech you to cultivate secret prayer;—to be constant in the study of God's holy word;—to remember the Sabbath-day to keep

it holy;—and never to neglect the appointed services of the sanctuary. I entreat you to live in peace and love with all men, with good will rendering every neighbourly office one toward another. And oh! my dear friends, never forget that you are dying men. In a very little time we shall all be summoned hence. Prepare, my brethren, to meet your God. To you to live be Christ, and then to you to die will be gain.

Brethren, I bless you all in the name of the Most High God. May his blessing rest upon you in soul and body, in family and friends, in your fields and flocks, and in all that you put your hands unto. May the Lord bless you here below with the riches of his grace, and bless you hereafter also with the riches of his glory!

Painful is it to part from those we love. The parting of a pastor and his people is not only painful, but deeply solemn. A page in the eternal record is now about to close, never again to be opened till the day of judgment. Then *I* must give an account how I have spoken, and *you* must answer how you have heard. God grant that we may both do so with joy and not with grief! I take you to record that I have endeavoured to deal faithfully with your souls in private, and have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God in public. We know not whether we may ever meet together again

the earth; we know that we must meet together

at the tribunal of the Judge. If any of you, my hearers, be cast away on the left hand, lay not your condemnation to my charge. I have warned you in times past, and I now entreat you this day, for the last time, to flee from the wrath to come. Your Saviour is willing to receive you. Believe in that atonement which his blood has made for your transgressions. Pray to him to create in you a clean heart, and to renew within you a right spirit. Rejoice in the free and full salvation set before you in the gospel. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ enable each of you to make an honest and an ardent determination to live in love, in gratitude, and in holiness, all the days of your life! Then shall our present sorrow not prove an everlasting grief;—then shall our present parting be terminated by a blessed re-union in the presence of God and of the Lamb for ever and for evermore.

And now, brethren, farewell—a long farewell. "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified;" and "now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

FAREWELL SERMON

AT GUNWALLOE,

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, 23RD. AUGUST, 1846.

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2 CORINTHIANS xiii. 14.

"*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.*"

BELOVED brethren, I am now about to close my ministry amongst you. The providence of God has called me to another sphere of ministerial labour. I have been united to you for ten years in unbroken affection. And how shall I best express the ardent desires of a pastor's heart, or offer up a prayer on your behalf, sufficiently comprehensive of all the blessings which I can desire or you can need? The example of the Apostle instructs me. He was now writing to bid farewell to his Christian brethren at Corinth, and he pours forth upon them in these words the warm emotions of his heart. He had gathered together into short sentences, few but forcible, the various advices which he wished to impress upon their minds, and now he breathes forth his last and

most fervent desire on their behalf in the beautiful and comprehensive prayer of the text.

By this example of the Apostle would I humbly seek to be directed on the present most trying occasion. I deeply feel the solemnity of my position in now addressing you for the last time. I inwardly tremble at the amount of responsibility which this closing day of my ministry must sum up against me; and my soul is overwhelmed with emotion when I say, in the words of the Apostle, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect. Be of good comfort. Be of one mind. Live in peace; and the God of love, and peace, shall be with you." "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

The last verse of this epistle sets before us a three-fold prayer of the Apostle. He prays that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the love of God, and that the communion, or fellowship, of the Holy Ghost, may be with the Christians at Corinth. To these three topics would I this day desire briefly to direct your attention, by adverting to the undivided work of blessing, in which the sacred Trinity delight to engage; and may the Holy Spirit, who is the guide into all truth, be pleased to enlighten our minds, and to give us an inward and saving apprehension of these great realities!

The Apostle prays, you observe, for a blessing

from all the Persons in the sacred Trinity. The blessings he specifies are peculiarly referable to each. Love flows from God the Father, grace comes by God the Son, and fellowship with that love and grace is only to be enjoyed through God the Holy Ghost. The grace of Christ the Son reveals the love of God the Father, and ensures the communion of God the Holy Ghost. Examine the Scriptures diligently, my brethren, and you will find that every intimation which they give of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost, is of a practical character, exhibiting the several Divine Persons united in most blessed offices of love and mercy for the redemption and happiness of man. My brethren, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, delight to bless.

To impress this truth upon our minds, let us adduce a few examples from sacred Scripture. If we go back to the earliest history of our world, we shall find the very first intimation of this doctrine practically exhibited in connection with the creation of our race. And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." God the Father created Adam from the dust by Jesus Christ, and breathed within him life by the Divine Spirit; and then the Triune Jehovah pronounced him to be "very good," Gen. i. 31.

When Isaiah beheld the glory of the Lord, he heard the seraphim around the throne offering three-

fold adoration, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory;" that is, of his goodness, Isaiah vi. 3.

Again, the Divine Redeemer, addressing his ancient church, thus declares, "And now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent ME. Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go," Isa. xlviii. 16. This practical exhibition of the Trinity in unity, sending forth the Redeemer to be the teacher and the leader of his people, is alike clear to our understanding and comforting to our hearts.

Again, it is our high privilege, by the express command of our Divine Redeemer, to be baptized into the name of the sacred Trinity. "Go teach all nations," said He to his disciples, "baptizing them into the name (not names) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The name of the Three Persons in the Godhead is not more freely thus named upon us, than are all the blessings which they severally communicate freely added therewith. Believing this delightful truth, we rejoice with St. Paul to say of these several Persons in the sacred Trinity, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same SPIRIT; and there are diversities of administrations, but the same LORD; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same GOD who worketh all in all," 1 Cor. xii. 4—6.

So eminently important, so powerfully practical, and so pregnant with blessing, is this doctrine in the hands of the Apostle, that there is no subject to which he fails to apply it.

Does he speak of adoption?—He says, "Because ye are sons, *God* (*i. e.*, God the Father,) hath sent forth the *Spirit* of his *Son* into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 6.

Does he speak of access unto God?—He says, "Through *Him* (the Lord Jesus Christ) we both have access by one *Spirit* unto the *Father*," Eph. ii. 18.

Does he speak of believers as temples?—He says, "In *whom* (God the Son) ye are builded together for an habitation of *God* (*i. e.*, God the Father,) through the Spirit," (that is, God the Holy Ghost,) Eph. ii. 22.

Does he speak of gratitude and thankfulness?—He says, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the *Lord*, (that is, the Lord Jesus,) because *God* (*i. e.*, God the Father,) hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the *Spirit* (*i. e.*, God the Holy Ghost,) and belief of the truth," 2 Thes. ii. 13.

Does he offer up prayer?—He says, "The *Lord* (that is, God the Holy Ghost,) direct your hearts into the love of *God*, (*i. e.*, God the Father,) and into the patient waiting for *Christ*," (*i. e.*, God the Son,) 2 Thes. iii. 5.

Does he speak of a peaceful conscience?—He says, "How much more shall the blood of *Christ*, who, through the eternal *Spirit*, offered himself without spot to God, (*i. e.*, God the Father,) purge your conscience," Heb. ix. 11.

With these agree the testimony of St. Peter; for he thus addresses the strangers to whom he writes, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the *Father*, through sanctification of the *Spirit*, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ*," 1 Pet. i. 2.

Surely these varied, and interesting, and instructive examples of the united operations and blessings of the several Persons in the sacred Trinity, will have prepared our minds to appreciate, and to enjoy, the emphatic and practical benediction of the Apostle in the words of the text, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." This benediction bestowed on the Christian church is similar in character to that threefold benediction which was pronounced on the ancient church of Israel, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

What a beautiful and harmonious exhibition of the Triune Jehovah does this apostolic benediction unfold! God the Father is the source of love: God

the Son is the gracious expression of that love : and God the Holy Ghost gives to the hearts of believers a true and living fellowship with the love of God the Father and with the grace of God the Son. Let all the three Persons, therefore, be equally acknowledged. Let us be careful to give each the glory due unto His holy name. God the Father is the fountain of mercy to us sinners. We are not to imagine that the Lord Jesus is more gracious to us than God the Father. We are not to speak as if he were propitiating an angry God, whom it was difficult to reconcile to fallen men. On the contrary, it was the love of God the Father which gave God the Son to be our Saviour. Ever, therefore, oh Christian, think of the first Person in the holy Trinity as love. "God is love." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son."

Think of the second Person in the holy Trinity as *gracious*. Grace is manifested love. It is favour. He who dwelt in the bosom of the Father came forth to declare the love which existed in that bosom towards man. We cannot otherwise comprehend invisible love than through manifested grace. As we behold the glory of the Father only in the face of his dear Son, so we learn his love only by the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ.

To these, however, it is necessary to add the fellowship of God the Holy Ghost. With that love of God the Father, and that grace of God the Son, we

can have no acquaintance, no sympathy, without the communion of God the Holy Ghost.

In order to communion there must be things in common, an identity of sentiment and feeling, a oneness of life and action;—as Christ brought of the things of God the Father, and revealed them unto man, so the Spirit takes of the things of God the Son, and shows them unto the soul. Between these three Sacred Persons there exists a perfect love, a perfect harmony, a perfect sympathy, a perfect joy, an undivided glory; and it is only by the Third Person in that ever blessed and perfect Unity, that we are brought into communion with that love, that harmony, that sympathy, that joy, and that glory. The communion of the Holy Ghost is the completion, and the fruition, of the love of God the Father, and of the grace of God the Son. It is at once the fellowship of the Spirit with the believer, and the fellowship of the believer with the Spirit, and through him with the Father and with the Son.

Unity is the perfection of the Triune Godhead, and into a measure of this blessed state, are all, who serve the Lord Christ, brought by the Divine Spirit. He takes of the things that are common to the Holy Trinity, and communicates them severally to individual believers. He makes us partakers of their love, their grace, and their desires; harmonizes us to their sentiments; assimilates us to their holi-

ness; and conforms us in thought and word and action to their blessed will.

This, my brethren, is the communion of the Holy Ghost, for which the Apostle here prays. This is the communion which enabled St. John to exclaim, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." This is the communion which explains the whole doctrine of the Trinity to the most humble believer; and *he* is to be regarded as the most deeply learned in this great mystery, who inwardly feels the love which God the Father bears to him; who surely believes the grace which God the Son has manifested towards him; and who fully enjoys the communion of the Holy Ghost imparted to his soul. Oh! happy above men is he who can say, 'I understand this doctrine with my heart, and I experience the saving blessedness it imparts to my soul. The First Person of the eternal Trinity is my reconciled Father;—the Second Person is my Saviour and my Elder Brother;—and the Third Person is my Teacher, my Sanctifier, and my Comforter!'

Oh, my dear brethren, do you thus know the great Jehovah to be your threefold Friend? Do you believe the eternal Father to be your Father? Do you know God the Son to be your Redeemer? Do you feel within your hearts the communion of God the Holy Ghost? Has this prayer of the Apostle been answered in your experience? Is this threefold bene-

diction now resting upon your souls? Do you enjoy the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost?

Do we *all* enjoy it? "May it be with you ALL," says the Apostle. Oh, that every individual in this house of prayer were not only a professor, but also a possessor, of the true faith. If there be but one unconverted soul here present,—if there be but one who is not a partaker, or who is a despiser, of this blessing, what shall we say to him? God the Father, have mercy upon thee! God the Son, have mercy upon thee! God the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon thee! Go not from this church without a resolution to search the sacred Scriptures. Go not from this house of the living God without inwardly praying for the enlightening Spirit to guide thee into all truth.

Oh, listen, my dear friends and Parishioners, to this last entreaty of your minister, and may this prayer of the Apostle be answered in the experience of every individual amongst you. This prayer has long formed the subject of my earnest pastoral supplications on your behalf. In how many of you has it been answered?—It is my fervent prayer for you all this day. Is it now being answered in your souls?—It will be my prayer for you all till I die. Oh that, if I never meet you again in life, I may meet many—yea, all of you—enjoying the fulfilment of this prayer throughout a blessed eternity.

While we are spared, let us pray one for another. Wherever our lot may be cast, let us pray one for another. However far we may be separated on earth, let us often meet each other at the throne of grace. "Brethren, pray for us." We also will never cease to pray for you.

The love of God the Father be with you. The grace of God the Son be with you. The communion of God the Holy Ghost be with you. May the Triune Jehovah be with you *all*, in the house, and by the way—in your secret closets, and in your public intercourse. May He be with you, in you, and about you, as a God of love, a God of grace, and a God of heavenly communion. May He be thus "with you"—with "ALL" of you—while you severally journey through the vale of life, when you each lie expiring on the bed of death, and when, with all the redeemed, you shall be brought once and for ever into the everlasting mansions.

To the young, I would say, Farewell. Remember this last advice and entreaty of your minister. Remember as you advance through life, daily to read the word of God;—night and morning to use secret prayer;—and in the various businesses of life, to imitate the example of those that love and serve the Lord.

To those in middle age, I would say, Farewell. Be mindful of all your earthly duties, but, oh! suffer them not to cause you to forget those that are

heavenly and eternal. Endeavour to glorify God in your whole life and conversation; and ponder always your many and solemn responsibilities.

To those that are advanced in life, I would say, Farewell. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." A hoary-headed sinner is the most awful spectacle we can behold on earth. Be diligent, I entreat you, my aged friends, to prepare for death, and judgment, and eternity.

To those amongst you that love the Lord, I would say, Farewell. The sorrow of our present parting is mitigated by the hope of a happy re-union, where sin, and sorrow, and separation, shall be unknown for ever. May we all be preserved, my brethren, unto that heavenly kingdom!

To those that love not the Lord Jesus Christ, I would also say, Farewell. The pain of present parting is intensely aggravated by the thought that we *may* never be united together again in time or in eternity. But may God grant that this last warning, or some other means of grace, may be effectual to your conversion! "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ," said the Apostle, "let him be Anathema Maranatha," that is, accursed at the coming of the Lord; and if any of you, my hearers, love Him not, either now or hereafter, to you I must say, Farewell—Farewell for ever!

To all amongst you, my dear Parishioners, from

whom I have uniformly received so much kindness, and all who hear me this day, I would say, "Finally, Brethren, Farewell. Be perfect; Be of good comfort; Be of one mind. Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you." "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

THE END.

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